

Vice Mayor Davis stated that Steve Spofford, Executive Director, RSTA, is interested in the distribution of the report. After distribution of the report the next steps to be taken are unclear, she said. She stated that she would like internships and job fairs for middle school students.

Councillor Simmons stated that the business community feels that students need to improve their job skills and she feels that students need to get job-ready.

Vice Mayor Davis spoke about the *Special Presentation* made on February 25, 2002 to the Chamber of Commerce about Best Business Practices. Ms. Stuardi distributed the Handbook entitled "Best Practices." The handbook, she said, covers literacy and internship development programs. There are 12-15 unique programs highlighted in the handbook. Vice Mayor Davis stated that the good business practices need to be expanded. Ms. Rubenstein stated that businesses often want to know what they can do. These businesses need to be recognized. Councillor Simmons wanted to find out the status of the report. She felt that a reception should be held to honor the businesses that have exemplified best business practices. This could expand the resources, she said.

Ms. Rubenstein suggested getting a report on the process contained in **ATTACHMENT A** from the Assistant City Manager for Human Services.

Ms. Johnson stated that if workforce readiness is an issue the question should be asked if there is a life skill component at the high school.

Councillor Simmons expressed concern with the Housing Authority Workforce Program due to possible budget cuts.

Vice Mayor Davis stated that she wanted to expand "try-out" job opportunities for students. Eighth grade internships used to occur, she said. Councillor Simmons stated that more information is needed about job sharing.

Vice Mayor Davis stated that the action steps need to be narrowed down. Councillor Simmons stated that the topic of the next meeting could be to receive an update from the Assistant City Manager for Human Services about the information contained in **ATTACHMENT A**. It was suggested that representative from the School Department, Human Services and the Workforce Development be invited to attend the next meeting. The committee needs to chart a course on where we are going on youth employment, she said.

Councillor Simmons stated that she is interested in the small business community. She stated that she is particularly interested in businesses owned by women and persons of color and show they do business with the city. She stated that there was a study written regarding incubation businesses in Central Square. Small businesses find themselves shut out from doing business with the city. It is a good opportunity for women who have small children to own their own business. However, commercial rental

space cannot be found. Ms. Stuardi stated that there is more available space according to the updated rental list.

Ms. Rubenstein informed Councillor Simmons that the report she spoke about regarding incubator space was the Gibbs Report.

Councillor Simmons stated that she wanted the Women's Business Directory and the People of Color Director updated. She also wanted a cross-reference directory outlining who provides what service. The State Office of Minority Business Association (SOMBA) list is used for the bidding process, she said. Small businesses do not do business with the city because it takes too long to get paid. The city, she said, needs to do a better job in paying its vendors.

Ms. Rubenstein suggested that Ms. Johnson and Ms. Madden from Community Development give an overview of what the Community Development Department has done. She further stated that discussion is needed as to what happens after the directories are updated. She suggested a business-to business directory. Councillor Simmons stated that small businesses want to interact with the city and there is a need for small business to know whom to contact. Vice Mayor Davis stated that there is an Internet business-to business service. The city could use this type of approach to create information rather than a book format.

Ms. Rubenstein suggested a "buy local" campaign. Vice Mayor Davis suggested establishing a database. Ms. Johnson stated that the database could be done on the computer and could contain information on how to do business with the city. A brochure could then be produced, she said. Councillor Simmons stated that the information should also contain how to start a small business within the city.

Councillor Simmons stated that a link is needed with Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). In response to a question by Councillor Simmons, Ms. Johnson stated that the fee is based on income. Low-income and a small percentage of higher than low-income people are eligible. Councillor Simmons suggested inviting Jean Strain to the Economic Development Committee. Ms. Rubenstein informed the committee that small business consulting is done at the Community Development Department. Councillor Simmons responded that this information needs to be publicized and a packet containing this information needs to be distributed by the City Clerk's Office. Vice Mayor Davis suggested using the Public Information Officer in this capacity.

Vice Mayor Davis stated that Ms. Rubenstein needs to provide a follow up report on the Central Square meeting. This issue should be revisited, she said. Councillor Simmons stated that there have been some changes in Central Square since the meeting. The issue of what could be done should be reviewed. The highest priority to revisit is the promotion of small businesses in the city, stated Vice Mayor Davis. The free market, she said, is not working in Cambridge.

Ms. Stuardi stated that the Chamber prepares a Buyers Guide for Cambridge. Councillor Simmons stated that small businesses should be included in the Guide prepared by the Chamber. Ms. Stuardi responded that the Chamber is a member organization. A search cannot be done by the categories of women, persons of color or green buying. Ms. Johnson asked Ms. Stuardi about the fee schedule. Ms. Stuardi responded that fees are based on the number of employees.

At the conclusion of the meeting the committee outlined its work to include:

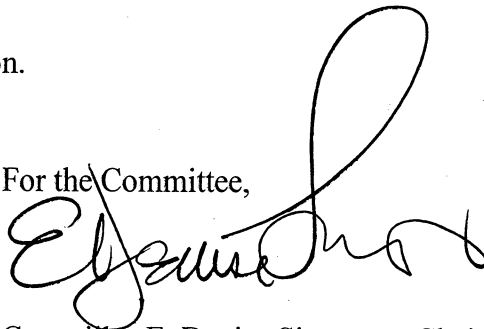
Gibbs Report;
Buy Cambridge Initiative;
Small Businesses;
Directory update and procurement; and
Central Square update.

The next meeting of the committee was scheduled for Tuesday, April 2, 2002 at 11:00 a.m. to receive a status report on the process contained in **ATTACHMENT A**.

Councillor Simmons thanked all attendees.

The meeting adjourned at noon.

For the Committee,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Denise Simmons', written over a horizontal line.

Councillor E. Denise Simmons, Chair



ATTACHMENT A

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CITY OF CAMBRIDGE • EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Robert W. Healy, City Manager

Richard C. Rossi, Deputy City Manager

February 25, 2002

To The Honorable, The City Council:

In response to Awaiting Report Item No. 01-258, regarding a report on forming a task force on career opportunities in Cambridge, Assistant City Manager for Human Services Jill Herold reports the following:

On January 29, 2002, Deputy City Manager Richard Rossi convened a meeting of key City representatives to discuss a suitable vehicle for creating a partnership between Cambridge businesses, universities, schools, residents and workforce and economic development professionals in order to improve employment prospects for Cambridge residents.

Several existing groups were identified as already working to forge similar partnerships including the Partnership for Public Education, the new Rindge School of Technical Arts (RSTA) Advisory Committee and the Office of Workforce Development's Business Advisory Committee.

Although the key findings of the Community Development Report "Education and Skill for the New Economy: A Survey of Employment Trends in Cambridge" are relevant for both adults and young people the assembled group concluded that the timing is right to focus on youth and the Cambridge Public Schools.

Rather than launching a new task force at this time, the group recommended conducting a series of conversations with key stakeholders about using the results of the Community Development report as a catalyst for developing new types of internships and other career exploration opportunities for Cambridge students. The Department of Human Service Programs and the Office of Workforce Development could lead this effort, with close cooperation from the Community Development Department. Since the support of the Cambridge Public Schools will be essential for any initiative involving Cambridge students, it was decided that the next step would be to have a discussion with Superintendent Bobbie D'Alessandro regarding appropriate representation from the School Department in these conversations. The second conversation would take place with the two co-chairs of the Cambridge Partnership for Public Education, Paul Parravano and Kathleen Granchelli. Out of these and possibly other meetings, goals can be defined and strategies developed for creating new relationships between local businesses, City Departments and the Cambridge Public Schools leading to promising career opportunities for residents.

Very truly yours,

[Handwritten signature of Robert W. Healy]
Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec

City of Cambridge

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Councillor E. Denise Simmons, Chair
Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis
Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves*

In City Council March 18, 2002

The Economic Development, Training and Employment Committee held a public hearing on Thursday, February 28, 2002, at eleven o'clock A.M. in the Ackermann Room.

The purpose of the meeting was to receive a general overview and assessment of economic development issues in the City.

Present at the meeting were Councillor E. Denise Simmons, Chair of the Committee, Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis, Beth Rubenstein, Assistant City Manager for Community Development, Susan Glaser, Deputy Director of Community Development, Estella Johnson, Economic Development Director, Community Development Department, Lisa Stuardi, Director of Government and Community Affairs, Cambridge Chamber of Commerce and Donna P. Lopez, Deputy City Clerk.

Councillor Simmons opened the meeting. She stated that she wanted to know the mission of the Economic Development Division of the Community Development Department. She also wanted to know if there was any unfinished business from the previous term that should be carried forward. She asked Vice Mayor Davis about the work that was done when she was chair of this committee.

Vice Mayor Davis stated that during the last term the committee focused on workforce issues and this matter was referred to the City Manager. She wanted to make sure that this issue was kept alive. She spoke about the report entitled "Education and Skill for the New Economy: A Survey of Employment Trends in Cambridge" that was prepared by the Community Development Department. She further stated that she wanted to get this report distributed and to get the information to the School Department. On the City Manager's Agenda of February 25, 2002 there was a report regarding using the report prepared by the Community Development Department to develop new types of internships and other career opportunities for Cambridge students (**ATTACHMENT A**). Vice Mayor Davis stated that the focus is on developing an agency summit to get all agencies together to discuss the issues. She further informed Councillor Simmons about the Central Square meeting that was held as a joint meeting between the Economic Development, Training and Employment and the Neighborhood Long-Term Planning Committees. She also stated that small businesses should be promoted in Cambridge. The Harvard Square Defense Fund held a meeting regarding American Independent Business Association (AMIBA) and this committee should learn about this meeting.

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Committee Report #2

Committee Report from Councillor E. Denise Simmons, Chair of the Economic Development, Training and Employment Committee, for a meeting held on February 28, 2002 to receive a general overview and assessment of economic development issues in the City.

In City Council March 18, 2002

Report Accepted

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